

SECTION XII. IMPLEMENTATION

A. INTRODUCTION

The policies and recommendations set forth in this Master Plan are intended to be implemented in a number of ways. While amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are most commonly associated with implementing the Future Land Use Plan, there are other regulatory amendments that are recommended within this Master Plan that will need action.

Amendments to the Capital Improvement Program are another means to implement recommendations for specific projects and improvements to municipal facilities, as well as transportation and utility infrastructure.

Where the recommended projects or improvements involve public/private partnerships or economic development proposals, redevelopment initiatives are an appropriate response.

Implementation may also occur through initiating or perpetuating programs that will accomplish certain policies contained in this Plan.

Lastly, there is an identified need for continued studies, planning, and design efforts to effectuate some of the recommendations of this Master Plan.

B. REGULATORY AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulatory device for implementing land use changes as recommended in this plan. The City adopted a completely new Zoning Ordinance in November 2001 which implemented the land use recommendations of the 1993 Master Plan and its subsequent amendments. This represented the first completely new Zoning Ordinance in almost 25 years, and much of what was adopted does not need to be changed in terms of format, administrative provisions, definitions, supplemental standards, provisions related non-conformities, and other similar features of the Ordinance. What will need to be amended in the Ordinance in order to incorporate the recommendations of this Master Plan are the sections related to the establishment of zoning districts (including overlay districts) and their related purpose statements, the zoning map, the table of uses and table of dimensional regulations, and some related design standards. Total revision of these sections of the Ordinance would not be necessary; specific amendments to these sections would be appropriate.

Detailed recommendations are found primarily in Section III. Land Use, with some additional recommendations contained in Section V. Economic Development, and Section VII. Conservation and Open Space. Key recommendations include amendments to accomplish the following:

- Provisions for high intensity mixed use for the Northern and Central Opportunity Corridor
- Allowance of a mixed use, high residential density village in the Southern Opportunity Corridor

- Addition of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program
- Inclusion of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) standards
- Retention of mandatory cluster development outside of the Urban Growth Boundary
- Reduction of density outside of the Urban Growth Boundary
- Enhancement of buffers between incompatible land uses
- Perpetuation of natural and environmental resource protection
- Introduction of an Aquifer Protection District
- Reservation of Garvins Falls for development pursuant to a unified, comprehensive economic development initiative
- Allowance for existing buildings in industrial areas to be converted to office use without having to add additional stories
- Re-evaluation of the City's parking requirements for various land uses to determine if a lesser standard can be employed

2. Other Regulatory Amendments

a. Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations

The Planning Board should consider amendments to the Site Plan Review and Subdivision Regulations to address the following recommendations:

From Section III. Land Use

- Retention of the capacity for future rail service to and through the City by protecting rail corridors, restricting any diminution of the transportation capacity of these corridors, and promoting compatible adjacent land uses thereto

From Section VI. Transportation

- Explicit inclusion of connectivity, traffic calming, and access management requirements and standards.
- Continue to require landscaping along the street edge in site development projects and a street tree planting and maintenance program as a requirement for new private roads
- Continue to require that utilities be placed underground in all new development, and in the redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial development when feasible

From Section VII. Conservation and Open Space

- Require site development to take into account the natural site conditions during the design process and, where appropriate, to preserve and promote such physical and natural features as rivers, streams, ponds, marshes, wetlands, scenic vistas, steep slopes, woodlands, wildlife habitat, and special geological features.
- Require site development to minimize the destruction of natural vegetation and alteration of terrain

From Section VIII. Historic Resources

- Inclusion of a requirement for the identification of historic resources and the mitigation of impacts to the same.

b. Building Codes

The City should consider amendments to Health, Building, Housing, and Life Safety Codes to address the following recommendations:

From Section IV. Housing

- Routine updating of Health, Building, Housing, and Life Safety Codes in order to incorporate new technologies and practices, to respond to evolving energy and resource conservation practices, and to address handicapped accessibility issues

From Section V. Economic Development

- Adoption of the International Building Code to encourage the reuse of existing structures

From Section VIII. Historic Resources

- Amendment of the Codes to reduce impediments to adaptive reuse of historic structures

c. Design Review Guidelines

From Section III. Land Use

- Development of specific guidelines for non-residential and mixed use areas

From Section V. Economic Development

- Provision of architectural and design regulations varied by neighborhood, as each neighborhood has its own distinct characteristics and development history

From Section VIII. Historic Resources

- Revisions to address historic areas of Downtown Concord and Penacook

d. Impact Fee Ordinance

From Section III. Land Use

- Provision of impact fee credits as an incentive for strategic redevelopment areas.

From Section IV. Housing

- Continuation of the regular updating of the Impact Fee system

e. Other Regulatory Measures

From Section VI. Transportation

- continue to evaluate and designate truck routes within the city and implement restrictions and standards on through trucking

From Section VIII. Historic Resources

- Initiation of Scenic Road designations pursuant to RSA 231:157, where appropriate, in rural areas of the City

C. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

RSA 674:5 provides that “where the planning board has adopted a master plan, the local legislative body may authorize the planning board to prepare and amend a recommended program of municipal capital improvement projects projected over a period of at least 6 years”. RSA 674:21 authorizes the adoption of “an innovative land use control...when supported by the master plan” and goes on to specify impact fees as a type of innovative land use control, but one which requires the adoption of a capital improvement program as a prerequisite”.

The City annually updates a Six Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) the first year of which is the Capital Budget for the current fiscal year. The CIP includes projects for the construction of new buildings and infrastructure; land acquisition; the repair and replacement of infrastructure, buildings and certain equipment; as well as planning and design efforts. While the Planning Board once reviewed a draft Capital Improvements Program, as prepared by the City Manager, and reported its findings to the City Council, that practice subsided in the 1980's and has not been revived. However, in 2000, the City adopted an Impact Fee Ordinance which the Planning Board is charged with administering. Given the statutorily envisioned relationship among the Master Plan, a Capital Improvements Program, and an Impact Fee Ordinance, it would be appropriate for the Planning Board to again review and comment on the Six Year Capital Improvement Program and the annual Capital Budget prior to its annual adoption by the City Council. The focus of such commentary would be the consistency of CIP projects with the Master Plan.

The primary capital improvement projects that are proposed in this Master Plan are as follows:

From Section V. Economic Development

- Investment in quality visual improvements and perpetual maintenance that enhance the visitor's experience at the major gateway entries to the City
- Continuation of the creation of linked trail systems and greenways for recreation and wildlife, thereby providing a community amenity that would be accessible for and recognized by residents, visitors, and businesses.

From Section VI. Transportation

- Implementation of the Concord Municipal Airport Master Plan
- Construction of short term highway improvements including those related to the Loudon Road Corridor, the Manchester Street Corridor; and the North State/Fisherville/Village Street Corridor, and the completion of Whitney Road
- Upgrading of the Sewalls Falls Bridge

- Design, acquire right-of-way, and construct as funding permits long term highway improvements including those related to the Opportunity Corridor, the transportation infrastructure necessary for development of Garvins Falls, Langley Parkway North
- Construction of sidewalks inside the Urban Growth Boundary in the following order of priority: on arterial and collector roads, on walk-to-school routes, on local streets in high density residential neighborhoods, and on local streets in low density neighborhoods
- Installation of appropriate signage for all existing and new bicycle routes
- Construction or marking of bicycle lanes on arterial and collector roads
- Continuation of the appropriate placement of bus stops and shelters to support the operation of the Concord Area Transit bus system
- Acquisition of a site for a future multi-modal transit station within the Opportunity Corridor
- Continuation of funding for street tree planting and maintenance

From Section VII. Conservation and Open Space

- Acquisition of rights in land for open space and trails in accordance with this Master Plan in areas including the Merrimack River Corridor, Broken Ground, Oak Hill, and Horse Hill, as well as trail linkages between open spaces areas, and connecting open space areas to villages and neighborhoods
- Continuation of the development of trails, boat ramps, boardwalks, and other facilities for public access to Concord's open space where such access will not adversely impact natural resources and the ecology of the open space

From Section IX. Recreation

- Acquisition of land for parks
- Construction of recreation improvements in existing and new parks
- Closure of the former Old Suncook Landfill, and capping as necessary, and redevelopment as a neighborhood park

D. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIONS

From Section IV. Housing

- Reinstitution of the Neighborhood Planning Program
- Reinstitution of a rental housing inspection program
- Provision of support for efforts to create as well as rehabilitate low and moderate income housing and in providing permanently affordable housing

From Sections IV. Housing; and Section VII. Conservation and Open Space

- Continuation of the evaluation of tax title properties for retention by the City for open space, housing, or economic development purposes

From Section V. Economic Development

- Institution of a business incubator/assistance program
- Creation of a Redevelopment Authority

- Encouragement of local secondary educational facilities to tailor curriculum and programs which are oriented to serve local businesses and industries.
- Provision of proactive developer guidance through business assistance programs or existing agencies, to help developers to understand and prepare for the City's regulatory processes.
- Assumption of a leadership role in initiating regional discussions, forming cooperative arrangements, and fostering creative solutions to the regional issue of promoting appropriate workforce housing

From Section VII. Conservation and Open Space

- Continuation of working with volunteers, private conservation groups, landowners, adjacent towns, and the agencies of the state and federal governments to protect, monitor and maintain the open space
- Continuation of acceptance of donations of conservation easements and/or fee simple title to open space lands only after a determination that the donation is consistent with the open space plan, and the site has been evaluated for the presence of hazardous wastes.
- Continuation of having conservation organizations as secondary grantees, holding easements or executory interests on publicly owned open space, to ensure that the land is protected in perpetuity

From Section VIII. Historic Resources

- Introduction of Neighborhood Heritage Districts
- Adoption of the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Act
- Provision of assistance in developing best management practices for the maintenance, rehabilitation, disposition and appropriate reuse of historical properties owned by the City and the school districts.

E. REDEVELOPMENT

From Section IV. Housing

- Maximizing the inclusion of housing in City redevelopment projects

From Section V. Economic Development

- Seek the most fiscally productive forms of redevelopment and new development
- Initiation of the redevelopment of the Opportunity Corridor – Northern, Central, and Southern areas
- Continuation of the redevelopment of Downtown Concord and Penacook
- Attraction or promotion of a four year college with a residential campus
- Provide incentives for redevelopment, as opposed to new development, including relief from fees, density bonuses, and other forms of relief.

F. FURTHER PLANNING EFFORTS

From Section III. Land Use

- Village/neighborhood Plans
- Basin Street Area Brownfield Redevelopment Plan
- Coordination with the Federal, State, and County governments on planning for improvements within the City of Concord

From Section V. Economic Development

- Prepare a community arts and cultural plan with emphasis on (1) a public articulation of the community's embrace of its cultural identity, (2) broader participation among potential as well as existing participants in cultural activities, and (3) assistance to local arts/culturally-oriented nonprofit organizations

From Section VII. Conservation and Open Space

- Prepare an evaluation of management options for the City's open space system

From Section VIII. Historic Resources

- Completion of additional historic surveys for North State Street, West Concord Village, East Concord Village, and historic agricultural buildings citywide
- Completion of a study of the City's historic and prehistoric archeological resources
- Establishment of additional National Register Historic Districts

From Section IX. Recreation

- Preparation of park plans and designs for recreation improvements for new parks
- Conduct an evaluation of City policy related to the provision of Community Centers in each Village/Master Plan District

